

Consumer Product Safety Alert

FROM THE U.S. CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION, WASHINGTON, D.C. 20207

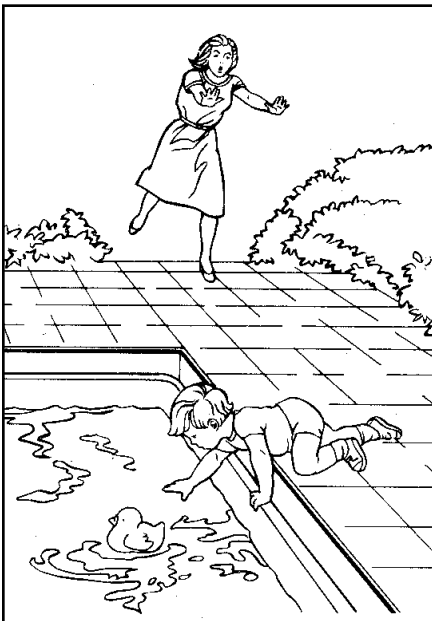
Backyard Pool

Always Supervise Children, Safety Commission Warns

According to the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission, an estimated 260 children under five years of age drown each year in residential swimming pools and spas. The Commission estimates that another 3,000 children under age five are treated in hospital emergency rooms following submersion accidents each year. Some of these submersion accidents result in permanent brain damage.

Nationally, drowning is the fourth leading cause of death to children under five. In some states such as California, Florida and Arizona, drowning is the leading cause of accidental death to children under five.

CPSC offers the following tips for pool owners:



Never leave a child unsupervised near a pool.

Instruct babysitters about potential hazards to young children in and around swimming pools and the need for constant supervision.

- Completely fence the pool. Install self-closing and self-latching gates. Position latches out of reach of young children. Keep all doors and windows leading to the pool area secure to prevent small children from getting to the pool. Effective barriers and locks are necessary preventive measures, but there is no substitute for supervision.

- Do not consider young children "drown proof" because they have had swimming lessons; young children should always be watched carefully while swimming.

- Do not use flotation devices as a substitute for supervision.

- Never use a pool with its pool cover partially in place, since children may become entrapped under it. Remove the cover completely.

- Place tables and chairs well away from the pool fence to prevent children from climbing into the pool area.

- Keep toys away from the pool area because a young child playing with the toys could accidentally fall in the water.

- Remove steps to above ground pools when not in use.

- Have a telephone at poolside to avoid having to leave children unattended in or near the pool to answer a telephone elsewhere. Keep emergency numbers at the poolside telephone.

- Learn CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation).

- Keep rescue equipment by the pool.

PARENTS AND GUARDIANS: ONLY YOU CAN PREVENT A DROWNING. WATCH YOUR CHILD CLOSELY AT ALL TIMES. MAKE SURE DOORS LEADING TO THE POOL AREA ARE CLOSED AND LOCKED. YOUNG CHILDREN CAN QUICKLY SLIP AWAY AND INTO THE POOL.

CPSC requests that consumers report incidents of drowning or "near drowning" by calling the Commission toll-free at 1 800638-2772.

THE CONSUMER PRODUCT SAFETY COMMISSION CAUTIONS DIVERS ABOUT IMPROPER DIVING PRACTICES

Diving injuries can result in quadriplegia, paralysis below the neck, to divers who hit the bottom or side of a swimming pool, according to CPSC. Divers should observe the following precautions:

- Never dive into above-ground pools. They are too shallow.

- Don't dive from the side of an in-ground pool. Enter the water feet first.

- Dive only from the end of the diving board and not from the sides.

- Dive with your hands in front of you and always steer up immediately upon entering the water to avoid hitting the bottom or sides of the pool.

- Don't dive if you have been using alcohol or drugs because your reaction time may be too slow.

Improper use of pool slides presents the same danger as improper diving techniques. Never slide down head first- slide down feet first only.